

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1 - 20. (canceled)

1 21. (currently amended) A method of operating a
2 spinneret having a multiplicity of spinning apertures through which
3 a molten plastic is forced to form filaments, the method comprising
4 the steps of:

5 a) closing dirt-contaminated or clogged spinning
6 apertures of the spinneret with plugs consisting at least in part
7 of at least one oxidizable binder substance consisting at least
8 partially of amorphous carbon which, upon oxidative decomposition,
9 is destroyed;

10 b) subjecting at least a portion of the device containing
11 the apertures and the plugs to a pyrolysis treatment for breakdown
12 of residual plastic on the portion of the device; [[and]]

13 c) thereafter subjecting the portion of the device to an
14 oxidative treatment to oxidize ~~the substance~~ and destroy the binder
15 substance of the plugs and reduce the plugs to ash; and

16 d) cleaning the ash from the portion.

1 22. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 21 wherein the plugs consist of graphite and the oxidizable
3 substance.

1 23. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 21 wherein the pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out at a
3 subatmospheric pressure.

1 24. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 23 wherein the pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out under
3 inert conditions.

1 25. (currently amended) The method defined in claim
2 [[24]] 21 wherein the oxidative treatment of step c) is carried out
3 at a temperature above 100°C in the presence of at least one
4 oxidizing medium.

1 26. (currently amended) The method defined in claim
2 [[25]] 21 wherein the oxidative treatment is carried out at a
3 temperature above 150°C.

1 27. (currently amended) The method defined in claim 26
2 wherein the oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature
3 between [[210°C]] 200°C and 600°C.

1 28. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 27 wherein the oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature
3 of 250°C to 550°C.

1 29. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 28 wherein the oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature
3 of 350°C to 500°C.

1 30. (currently amended) The method defined in claim
2 [[29]] 21 wherein the oxidizing medium is air or pure oxygen.

1 31. (currently amended) The method defined in claim
2 [[30]] 21 wherein the oxidative treatment is carried out at a
3 reduced pressure.

1 32. (currently amended) The method defined in claim
2 [[31]] 21 wherein the portion is cleaned ~~following at least one of~~
3 ~~the treatments~~ in an ultrasound bath.

1 33. (currently amended) The method defined in claim
2 [[32]] 21 wherein the portion is cleaned ~~following at least one of~~
3 ~~the treatments~~ with a high-pressure cleaner.

1 34. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 21 wherein the pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out at a
3 subatmospheric pressure.

1 35. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 21 wherein the pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out under
3 inert conditions.

1 36. (previously presented) The method defined in claim
2 21 wherein the oxidative treatment of step c) is carried out at a
3 temperature between 350°C to 500°C in the presence of at least one
4 oxidizing medium selected from the group consisting of air, oxygen-
5 enriched air and pure oxygen.

1 37 - 38. (canceled)